

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (original): A sealing material comprising a coating film comprising at least one kind of a metal or a metallic compound selected from the group consisting of metals, metal oxides, metal nitrides, metal carbides and complex thereof on the whole or a part of the surface of a substrate comprising a soft material having the shore D hardness of at most 75 and the shore A hardness of 40 to 100.

2. (original): The sealing material of Claim 1, wherein the soft material is an elastomer.

3. (original): The sealing material of Claim 1, wherein the soft material is a fluorine polymer material.

4. (currently amended): The sealing material of Claim 1, ~~2 or 3~~, wherein the soft material is a fluorine rubber.

5. (currently amended): The sealing material of Claim 1, ~~2, 3 or 4~~, wherein the thickness of the coating film is 0.005 to 1  $\mu\text{m}$ .

6. (currently amended): The sealing material of Claim 1, ~~2, 3, 4 or 5~~, wherein the soft material and the coating film are closely adhered with each other at the degree of adhesivity where the number of peeling between the soft material and the coating film is at most 50/100, which is measured by the cross-cut tape adhesion test (1 mm square/100 pieces) according to JIS K5600.

7. (currently amended): The sealing material of Claim 1, ~~2, 3, 4 or 5~~, wherein the soft material and the coating film are closely adhered with each other at the degree of adhesivity where the critical breaking load is at least 25 mN, which is measured with the microscratch test at the following conditions:

Note:

Test conditions:

Curvature radius of diamond stylus ••• 5.0  $\mu\text{m}$

Elastic arm ••• 146.64 g/ mm

Stage angle ••• 3.0°

Measurement speed ••• 10.0  $\mu\text{m/s}$

Load applying speed ••• 75.31 mN/mm

Excitation width ••• 79  $\mu\text{m}$

Excitation frequency ••• 30 Hz

8. (currently amended): The sealing material of Claim 1, ~~2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7~~, wherein all the rates of decrease in weight are at most 1 % by weight at irradiating respective plasmas of O<sub>2</sub>, CF<sub>4</sub>, and NF<sub>3</sub> under the following conditions:

Note:

Samples: A sheet having a thickness of 2 mm and a size of 10 mm x 35 mm

Irradiation conditions:

O<sub>2</sub> plasma and CF<sub>4</sub> plasma

Gas flow rate ••• 16 SCCM

Pressure ••• 20 mTorr

Output power ••• 800 W

Irradiation time ••• 30 minutes

NF<sub>3</sub> plasma

NF<sub>3</sub>/Ar ••• 1 SLM/ 1 SLM

Pressure ••• 3 Torr

Irradiation time ••• 2 hours

Temperature ••• 150°C

9. (currently amended): The sealing material of Claim 1, ~~2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8~~, wherein the coating film is formed by a vacuum film forming process.

10. (original): The sealing material of Claim 9, wherein the vacuum film forming process is an ion plating process.

11. (currently amended): The sealing material of Claim 1, ~~2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10,~~  
which is used for equipment for manufacturing a liquid crystal or a semiconductor.

12. (currently amended): A liquid crystal or semiconductor manufacturing equipment  
which has the sealing material of Claim 1, ~~2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 or 11.~~

13. (original): A process for preparing a sealing material comprising a step of coating the  
whole or a part of the surface of a substrate comprising of a soft material having the shore D  
hardness of at most 75 and the shore A hardness of 40 to 100 with at least one kind of a metal or  
a metallic compound selected from the group consisting of metals, metal oxides, metal nitrides,  
metal carbides and complexes thereof by ion plating process.